FREEDOM

An Anarchist Monthly

NEW SERIES, VOL. II, No. 2 FEBRUARY, 1934 FIVE CENTS

Notes and Comments

The Austrian Tragedy:

The tragedy of Vienna, which has shocked a large part of the world and without exception all those who lay claim to humanitarian ideas, leaves one alternating between hope and despair. Despair in that a group of people who for fifteen years have struggled, according to their lights, to build a new and better social order on the ruins of one left by parasites and martinets, should have their efforts drowned in blood and their hopes all but shattered. Hope in that the heroic stand of the Viennese workers comes at a time when the world had almost lost hope that the Germanic people would ever rise above slavery.

We are indebted to the capitalist press for all our information concerning the struggle and hesitate to pass judgment on the leaders of the Socialists who, so we have been told over and over again, poll 40% of the total Austrian vote and 60% of the vote in Vienna. Dollfuss is reported to have made much of the fact that only 20,000 out of 1,500,000 Socialist voters revolted, but if 20,000 men and women actually did revolt and risk their lives and liberties there is still hope for Austria. Dr. Otto Bauer, described as the intellectual head of the Austrian Socialist party, in an interview given a representative of *The New York Times* at Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, and printed in that paper on February 18th, tells how "The dissatisfaction and agitation of the workers against the conservative policy of our party committee grew as government provocations increased." If this is true, and Mr. G. E. R. Gedye the correspondent writes as one most sympathetic, it reveals once again, and for the ten-thousandth time, the demoralizing and fatal results of dependence on authority. The workers saw what was coming when the "intellectual leader" didn't, but, having been drilled for decades in the belief that they must wait for the order of their leaders, they allowed time to pass, precious time, which gave the government opportunity to prepare the machinery to crush the revolt when it came. Perhaps it was unavoidable with Mussolini on one side and Hitler on the other; perhaps it was as our comrade Nettlau answered when I asked two years ago, why Vienna did not revolt against the intolerable conditions: "You can't have a revolution in a hospital, Vienna is sick." Debilitated by years of suffering and semi-starvation the will to resist was not strong, and the odds against them too heavy, so that the end was inevitable . . . if it was the end. We do not believe it was, but if so it was a glorious end that must put to shame those millions of German Communists, Socialists and Liberals who submitted to the iron heel of Hitler and his cohorts without a protest. The preliminaries, however, seem to be over and now we shall have the struggle between the reactionaries of the Hitler stripe and of the Mussolini stripe, and between them they will crucify the scholars and workers who made Vienna a city of joy . . . unless, that is, made desperate by the tyranny and suffering inflicted on them, the people rise and treat Dollfuss, Fey, and the other Fascists to the same kind of blood bath which they have been made to suffer.

Emma Goldman:

It is so seldom that social rebels receive recognition in their own time that it is with pleasure we report on the splendid tribute paid our comrade Emma Goldman at the Town Hall, New York, on February 6th. Permitted to enter these United States after an exile of fourteen years, she was guest of honor at a dinner held on the above date, the most inspiring affair this writer has attended in years. There was space for only 300 diners, but no less than 500 applications with money had to be returned. It was not a public affair, and no publicity was resorted to other than a few circulars sent to those known to be interested. To have 800 persons apply for the privilege of attending a dinner in honor of one deported fourteen years earlier is a rare tribute and shows that the work of our comrade during her 35 years in America was not in vain. After several songs by Miss Vida Milholland, accompanied by Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union who also acted as Chairman, speeches of greeting were made by Prof. John Dewey, America's foremost scholar and philosopher, Eliot White, Inez Haynes Irwin, Harry Weinberger, Prof. Beck, Leonard Abbott, Henry Alsberg, John Haynes Holmes and Harry Kelly. Considerably shaken by the many tributes paid her, Emma Goldman spoke feelingly of her comrades on that ill-fated voyage on the Buford and of general conditions today. Her lecture tour in this country is under the management of the Major Pond Lecture Agency, and we feel sure it will be a great success.

The Money Question:

An old and dear friend and comrade writes to warn us against devoting too much space to the money problem. At the same time we have been receiving books on this subject for review, one of which is by Arthur Kitson, veteran writer on the question. In the February 15th issue of *New Democracy*, the new Social Credit fortnightly published in New York, an article appears entitled "A New Economic Policy for the

(*Continued on page* 4)

The Anarchist Movement Today

By ALEXANDER BERKMAN

The history of human civilization is not a straight, continuously forward-moving line. Its diagram is a zigzag, now advancing, now retreating. Progress is measured by the distance separating man from his primitive condition of ignorance and barbarism.

At the present time mankind seems to be on the retreat. A wave of reaction is sweeping the countries of Europe; its effects and influences are felt all over the world. There is Fascism in Italy, Hitlerism in Germany, despotism in Russia, destructive dictatorship in other countries.

Every progressive and radical party, every revolutionary movement has suffered from the present reaction. In some countries they have been entirely crushed; in others their activities are paralyzed for the time being. It is the essence of all tyranny and dictatorship, of whatever name or color, to suppress and eradicate everything that stands in the way of its exclusive domination and triumph. Thus in Russia, for instance, the active Anarchist elements (as also the Mensheviki and the Socialist Revolutionists) have either been shot or are being kept in prisons and exile for indefinite periods. A similar fate has overtaken them in Italy and Germany.

But though Anarchism has suffered from the reaction, as have all other liberal and revolutionary movements, it has fundamentally and essentially lost much less than the Socialist parties. The reason for it is to be found in certain causes underlying the world-wide reaction. It is generally believed that the War, with its brutalization of man and destruction of the higher values, the financial bankruptcy which followed, and the great crisis have brought about the present situation. But these immediate causes are entirely insufficient to explain the incredibly rapid development and success of Fascism in Italy and Germany and its spread throughout the civilized world. Other and more potent factors have been at work, resulting in the great reaction.

Those factors are of a psychologic rather than of a political or economic character. Broadly speaking, there were two of them. One was the Russian Revolution; the other, Marxism.

The Russian Revolution flamed across the world as a beacon of promise and hope to the oppressed and disinherited. It filled the hearts of the masses in every country with inspiration and enthusiasm. The workers of Germany even tried to follow the example of their Russian brothers. But that beacon light was soon extinguished. The Bolsheviki, Marxists par excellence by Lenin's interpretation, curbed the popular aspirations of the people and perverted the revolutionary aims and purposes into one of the bloodiest dictatorships the world has ever seen. The despotism of a political party, of a clique, took the place of Tsarist autocracy. The result brought bitter disillusionment to millions of workers in every land, a disillusionment that has proven a powerful aid to the reactionary forces everywhere.

Yet that disillusionment would not necessarily have become such an effective lever in the hands of reaction but for another important factor. It was the spirit of authority, of Statism, the worship of government, with which the masses have for years been imbued by Marxism and by the Socialist political parties everywhere. It served to weaken their self-reliance, robbed them of independence in thought and action, and dampened their revolutionary faith and ardor. The Social Democracy of Germany, in particular, has done the greatest harm in this regard. For more than two generations it trained the proletariat in parliamentary inactivity, in systematic compromise, in reliance upon political leaders and in blind authoritarianism. This training checked the initiative and revolutionary efforts of labor, destroyed the workers' faith in their economic power, and made them dependent on the Marxist Messiah who was to lead them into the promised land of Socialism.

At a certain psychologic moment the Messiah came, and the expectant people "heard him gladly." He was not indeed *kosher* Marxist, but the odor of "socialist" was strong about him and his Nazi party. That sufficed, particularly after the bitter experiences of the German workers with their Socialist governments, which betrayed labor, oppressed and exploited the workers the same as the Junker regimes had done before them.

It is tragic that Socialism, which originated as a liberating movement, has in the course of time become so emasculated of all revolutionary spirit and purpose as to fall a victim to the reactionary Frankenstein it had itself helped to create. If history teaches anything at all, it is this: all progress has been a getting away from authority, a liberation from it—liberation from the authority of the village chief and of the tribal totem; from God, Church and the State. The essence of progress is anti-authoritarianism. Man's historic advance has been along the line of more and ever more individual liberty and popular freedom, of greater independence in thought and action, higher culture and improved social well-being. Everything that retarded or hindered that process has served to enslave man and resulted in regress and reaction.

It is because of the above basic truths that the Anarchist movement has suffered much less from the present reaction than have the Socialist parties. The latter now see their organization annihilated and the millions of their voters become the obedient and submissive followers of the Mussolinis and Hitlers. They have rarely had enough revolutionary resistance even to put up a fight. More: the very foundations of Socialism are broken, its theories proven false, its methods condemned by experience. *Socialism has lost not only its followers but also its ideology.* No wonder the Socialist

Parties of America, of Sweden and Belgium, the neo-Socialists of France and other countries have now decided to turn from the proletariat to the bourgeoisie for the realization of Socialism!

The Anarchist movement, on the contrary, has sustained only physical, superficial losses. It preserves what is the most vital thing in the life and growth of a world-liberating movement: its ideology, its ideal. Indeed, Anarchism is, essentially, strengthened and verified now by life itself. Parliamentarism has failed utterly. Marxist dogmas have been refuted by experience. Socialist panaceas have been tried and found wanting. The masses will never return to Socialism any more. The experience of Russia and betrayal by Socialist governments in other countries have embittered the workers and made the very name of political Socialism synonymous with treachery and failure.

The present wave of reaction will pass. Experience will teach the people that emancipation from tyranny, oppression and exploitation can be achieved only through Anarchism—in a social organization based on free, solidaric cooperation without any admixture of the vitiating and destructive spirit of authoritarianism. Solidarity without freedom is impossible; it inevitably leads back to slavery, open or masked. The future belongs to Anarchism.

Regarding the condition of the Anarchist movement at the present, the following may be said:

Anarchism is not a political party. Its strength cannot be measured by counting heads or ballots. The Anarchist movement is a vital factor of life, based on man's inherent love of liberty and desire for well-being. Anarchism finds expression in every form of human endeavor—in the economic and social, as well as in the cultural and artistic phases of existence.

As a movement, Anarchism may be considered in its twofold aspect: First, as a determining factor in the activities of the masses; and second, as work within the Anarchist organizations themselves, in the groups and federations. As an illustration of mass activity inspired by the ideal and methods of revolutionary Anarchism the labor movement of Spain may serve. Within one year (in February and December, 1933) two revolutionary uprisings have taken place in that country, both of a predominantly Anarcho-Syndicalist character, as expressed by the I.W.M.A. (the International Working Men's Association, known in the Eu ropean countries as the A.I.T.)

Anarchist groups and federations exist in every country, including Japan, Korea and China. Their work consists in spreading Anarchism by means of the spoken and written word. An approximation of this activity can be gained from the appended list of Anarchist publications in the various countries and languages.

It must be noted, however, that the literature of a great philosophy and social movement like Anarchism is not limited to the newspapers and magazines of Anarchist tendency existing at a given moment. That is accidental, depending on greater or lesser persecution. A true estimate must include, basically, the entire literature on the subject, and its continuous development up to the present.

Anarchist literature does not deal with the superficial, local political or economic conditions of life. It deals with the foundations—social, ethical, cultural, as well as political and economic—that underlie present-day society, and it is idealist in character. It is therefore that Anarchist literature does not go out of date. It keeps its social and practical value, as do philosophy and art, whatever the shallow surface changes in our authoritarian, capitalist civilization.

The finest expression of Anarchist thought and sentiment is to be found in works like William Godwin's "Enquiry concerning political Justice and Its Influence on general virtue and happiness" (1793); in the many works of Proudhon, like the keen analysis of 1848 French governmentalism in "Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire" (1845); in the numerous writings of Michael Bakunin, some of which are collected in *Oeuvres*, 6 volumes (Paris, 1895-1913); in the "Idées sur l'Organization sociale," by James Guillaume (1876); in the works of the Italian Anarchist, Errico Malatesta, practical theoretician and active militant from the seventies up to his death in 1932; in "Les Paroles d'un Revolté," (written 1879-1882) by Peter Kropotkin, as well as in the many other works of this Anarchist thinker and scientist; in "L'Evolution, la Révolution et l'Idéal anarchique" by Elisée Reclus (1897); in the "Collected Essays" of Voltairine de Cleyre (New York, 1914); in the writings of numerous Spanish Anarchists, such as Ricardo Mella, A. Pellicer Paraire, Tarrida del Marmol, Francisco Ferrer, and others; in the "Aufruf zum Sozialismus," by Gustav Landauer (1911); in the works of Benjamin Tucker, the Individualist Anarchist of America, man of clear and analytical mind; in those of Josiah Warren, Stephen B. Andrews, Lysander Spooner, Dyer D. Lum, Albert Parsons, C. L. James, Thoreau, William Morris, Edward Carpenter—to name but a few Anglo-Saxon thinkers of Anarchist tendency; in the books and other publications of Ernest Coeurderoy, Carlo Cafiera, Steinlen, Ibsen, Johann Most, Emma Goldman, Rudolf Rocker, Max Nettlau, Luigi Galleani, and of many other writers, including some memorable pages of Leo Tolstoi.

The Anarchist literature of the world is exceedingly rich. An approximate figure would comprise over 20,000 titles, of which about 3,000 would cover periodicals of longer or shorter duration, issued in 30 or 40 languages in about 40 countries.

"By efficient investigation and careful work on existing materials," writes Dr. Max Nettlau, the erudite Anarchist historian, "a list of this extent could be compiled, with a margin of inaccessible or lost publications, not counting the tens of thousands of smaller items, brochures, leaflets, pictures, etc., and not even referring to the evidence of Anarchist influence in literature, art, the drama."

In the face of these figures, the greater or smaller output of Anarchist literature at a given moment is of little account. The persecution and suppression of Anarchist publications here and there are incidents in a never-ceasing propaganda which has produced efforts of the greatest *continuity*.

(*Continued on page* 5)

FREEDOM

Successor to ROAD TO FREEDOM

NEW SERIES, VOL. II, No. 2

A Monthly Journal of Anarchist News and Opinion

Published Monthly by

Road to Freedom Publishing Ass'n

219 Second Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Address all mail to

P. O. Box 111, Station O, New York, N. Y.

Entered as Second Class Matter January 4, 1933, at the Postoffice at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879

Single copies Five Cents; $1.00 a year

Notes and Comments

(*Continued from page* 1)

Farmers' Holiday Association" by our comrade John G. Scott, publisher of *Mother Earth* and President of the New York State Farmers' Holiday Association, in which Social Credit is proposed as a solution for society's economic ills. Cramped for space as we are it is impossible to do even the barest justice to the problem of Money, but for ourselves we find *New Democracy* splendid reading and it grows better with each issue. As to the importance of the money problem, the following, clipped from an editorial in the *New York World-Telegram* for Feb. 17th, is, to put it mildly, an excellent hint: "The Commerce Department's new survey of the national income shows that in 1932 we paid out $5,506,000,000 [roughly five and a half billion dollars] in interest—about 3% less than we paid in 1929. Salaries in this period fell about 40%; wages about 60%; dividends about 56%; rents and royalties 56%." If that doesn't tell a story we miss our guess. Wages fell 60 per cent, salaries 40 per cent (under the heading of salaries come the incomes of bank and railroad presidents, some of them running as high as $150,000 a year), but the Old Man of the Sea, Interest, fell only 3 per cent. Short of a complete change in our social order one of the greatest evils is the problem of interest, and interest is money. It will be urged that by destroying government we can and will destroy interest, and as long as governments control the banks or defend them as they do now we will remain skeptical about establishing economic equality by means of attacking the question of money alone; but as one of the inevitable steps toward freedom we welcome discussion of the subject and consider it quite as important, if not more so, than merely denouncing the capitalists.

The N.R.A. and the Little Fellow:

Senators Borah and Nye recently made speeches in the Senate attacking the N.R.A. on the ground that it was violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by allowing the big fellows to create monopolies and kill off the small business man. At the time they made their speeches a hearing on the Poultry Industry, which lasted some days, was being held in Washington at which was brought out the interesting fact that between the farmer who raises the poultry and the city man or woman who buys it there are no less than *thirteen* persons who get a profit out of it. Rugged individualism and individual initiative are marvelous things, but when thirteen persons must get a profit before the farmer can get his product into the hands of the consumer it takes the brain of a Borah or a Nye to figure out the benefit to the consumer.

Lengthy Articles:

Some readers complain, and rightly, of the lengthy articles we print. Sometimes it is unavoidable and sometimes we prefer to print long articles that really have something to say to short ones that have not. Berkman's article in this issue, originally written for the General Jewish Encyclopedia soon to be issued in Paris, contains some things known to Anarchists, but printed in full it will serve as an excellent essay to circulate among those not familiar with our ideas. The Stelton School, soon to be 19 years old, is well worth the space given it, and we welcome Comrade Ferm's article on it.

In the February issue of *Man* there is an excellent article by Marcus Graham on Van der Lubbe which is well worth reading and for which we congratulate the writer. The same applies to the article of John Scott in the February 15th issue of *New Democracy* on the subject of Social Credit and the Farmer.

H. K.

TO THE VARIOUS GROUPS

The Free Society Group of Chicago has available several thousand copies of the pamphlets *What Is Anarchism*, by Hippolyte Havel, and *Anarchism and American Traditions*, by Voltairine de Cleyre, and as we still owe money to the printer, we would like to dispose of them at less than cost. We will sell them to the groups, in lots of not less than 100, (could include copies of both in a single lot) at the rate of 2¢ a piece, plus postage. The books are excellently printed, with the picture of the respective authors on the cover. They sell regularly for 5 and 10¢ each. Send your order with Money Order or check to cover, to B. Yelensky, 3332 Potomac Avenue, Chicago, Ill., including enough to cover postage. Or better still, write first stating how many you want and we'll tell you just how much to send.

THE FREE SOCIETY GROUP OF CHICAGO

THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT TODAY

(*Continued from page* 3)

Thus, to cite but a few instances. The New York Yiddish Anarchist weekly, *Freie Arbeiter Stimme,* has been appearing uninterruptedly since October, 1899. The Geneva *Le Réveil* and *Il Rèsveglio,* edited by Luigi Bertoni, were first issued in July, 1900. *Le Libertaire* (Paris) was founded in February, 1895, by Sébastian Faure, a militant Anarchist since 1888, who is now publishing the *Encyclopédie Anarchiste,* of which 2,592 immense pages have already appeared. Peter Kropotkin started *Le Révolté* in Geneva in February, 1879; later, after his imprisonment and expulsion, the paper was continued by other comrades with Jean Grave as editor (January, 1884), — the same Jean Grave who issues now, fifty years later, his periodical Anarchist papers, *Publications de "La Révolte"* and *"Temps Nouveaux." La Revista Blanca,* founded by Frederico Urales in Madrid in 1898, is still appearing under his editorship in Barcelona, having weathered even the storms of last December (1933).

These are but a few of the various forces that carry on the Anarchist ideal in unbroken continuity, and they by far outweigh the meager list to which persecution at times reduces the Anarchist press. At present there appear, in France: *Le Libertaire, Plus Loin, Le Semeur, La Voix Libertaire, l'en dehors, Action Libertaire, Le Combat Syndicaliste, Le Refractaire, La Brochure Manuello, Le Flambeau, Germinal,* etc. In Switzerland:*Le Réveil* and *Il Rèsveglio.* In England: *Freedom,* and *Freedom Bulletin.* In Belgium: *L'Emancipateur; Pensée et Action.*

A number of Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist publications appear in Holland (*Grondslagen, Syndicalist,* etc.); in Sweden (*Arbetraren,* and others); in Norway; in Lithuania (*Auszrina,* the Dawn); Bulgaria (*Misal i Volya; Rabotnik,* etc.), and in other European countries, as well as in Japan and China, most of these papers being issued underground.

In Spain there are: *Tierra y Libertad; Solidaridad Obrera* (daily); C. N. T. (the daily of the National Confederation of Labor); *La Revista Blanca; El Libertario; Estudios,* and a number of others. The NEWS SERVICE and BULLETINS of the International Working Men's Association (I.W.M.A. or A.I.T.), issued in Spanish, French, German and English, are also published in Spain.

In South America there appear numerous Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist papers and magazines. Frequently suppressed, they as frequently reappear, sometimes under different names. In Buenos Aires is published the daily, *La Protesta,* founded in June, 1897, as *La Protesta humana; Nervio,* an Anarchist journal of criticism, art and letters; and other papers, like the weekly *Il Pensiero* (Anarcho-Communist), *Culmine* (Individualist), *Sorgiamo,* etc. In Uruguay Luigi Fabbri issues the Anarchist review *Studi Sociali* (Montevideo). And so on. In Melbourne (Australia) appears *L'Avanguardia Libertaria.*

Anarchist papers in the Italian language are published in the United States, among them *L'Adunata dei Refrattari,* in Newark, N. J.; *Cronaca Sovversiva,* in New London, Conn., and other publications; also *Cultura Proletaria,* in Spanish; *Dielo Truda* and other journals in Russian. Among the English-language publications are: *Freedom* (formerly weekly, now monthly), in New York; *Vanguard; Clarion; Man!* (San Francisco,) and others.

In conclusion I want to say that the Anarchist movement will get bigger and stronger in proportion as the masses will become familiar with Anarchist ideals and will realize the necessity of putting them into practice. Historic experience and growing disillusionment with all forms of parliamentarism, authoritarianism and dictatorship will gradually make the people understand that emancipation from political oppression, economic slavery and cultural decadence is not possible except in an Anarchist society—a society based on individual liberty, equal opportunity and social well-being. The propaganda of Anarchist ideas will help to enlighten the people and enable them the more clearly and intelligently to find the way out of our perverted, stupid and criminal pseudo-civilization. It is therefore that the life, example and propagandistic work of Anarchist individuals and groups are so necessary and vital in furthering the cause of Anarchism.

France, Jan. 1934.

The Communist United Front Against War and Fascism

This is the latest clever scheme of the Communist Spider to allure unsuspecting pacifist and liberal flies into a web of deceit and illusion. Earl Browder, National Secretary of the Communist Party, was an objector in Leavenworth and is personally sincere and courageous, which is more than can be said for the bulk of Communists, who were patriotic or in hiding during the war. The Communists are not so much to blame for the deception of the conference recently held in New York City, for they openly say that they believe in the gun when it is in the hands of the Red Army, but not when it is in the hands of the capitalist. But why should the pacifists be so foolish as to think that they can enter a group that does not think for themselves, and win converts? Communists act only upon orders; they deride individual action against war, and nurse the illusion that the noise that they make constitutes mass action. They claim that they will enter the army, and by their traditional boring from within, create a Red Army. Those who know the Communists know that if they have the courage to get into the army they will give themselves away in a day or two. The Communist tactics of deceit and intrigue do not produce the character necessary for continued opposition to tyranny, but are useful in upholding tyranny over others when once power is granted.

Ammon A. Hennacy

Report of the Stelton Modern School

By ALEXIS C. FERM

It has been suggested to me that some resumé of the reports made to the School Board be written out for the benefit of the Parents' Association. Since the parents have the *School* and the *Depression* before them all the time, if they can not see the moral and do not know the value of free and creative work, of what use will a few words in a report be to make the work clearer?

If there is one thing that should stand out from this depression it is that training does not fit a man to meet any emergencies but those for which he has been trained, supposing that the mind can be trained to meet emergencies, and that the faculties of the mind that are used in these instances must grow through experience. Emergencies for the individual begin in childhood and if the adult is to emerge with a live mentality he must have the freedom to meet such emergencies as belong to his childhood life as they arise, which he will not be able to do if cooped up in a school room under constant direction whether he wants to be there or not. This holds true whether the boy or girl likes the regular school or does not. Some schools today are being made more pleasant by means of the radio, etc., but this does not affect our contention.

An interesting phase of the freer educational work is the attitude of the public school faculties that have come in contact with the children of The Modern School.

The Little Red School House was organized to demonstrate to the school authorities of New York that better work can be done with children through activities instead of sedentary school-book work, and the Teachers' Union proposed a similar plan. . . .

It has been maintained that the best way to propagate your ideas is just to do your work and to carry on, and that the rest of the world will eventually come to your door. Now see what the teachers in the public schools in and near Stelton are doing. They are praising the work of the School and telling about it, recognizing it as being, not the result of better training, but of freedom. Bear this in mind, those of you who are radically minded, that these conservative teachers recognize the fact that our children have more open minds, not as the result of better training but as the result of more freedom. Freedom in the choice of their activities. Now I hear someone say, "But you can't let a child do anything it wants to do." I'm not going to take that up now. Let Sallie, or Zack, or Billie, or anyone else who has a mind to. There ought to be no difficulty in answering that question.

These public school teachers who have come in contact with our children are propagandists. They are telling their news to their neighbors so that it is becoming known to teachers from Plainfield to New Brunswick. If we are not very careful it might even reach the Radicals in New York.

On the second or third Monday of October we were visited by a principal and one of the teachers from one of the primary schools in Plainfield. They had both been here on the previous Friday and Zack had asked them to come again so as to see the opening of the school morning. Unfortunately it was not a very interesting morning owing to the changes taking place in the assembly as well as in the school work. Or maybe that it was more interesting on that account. However, they were both interested and interesting, and we found that it was very easy to talk to them for they seemed to understand what it was all about and none of us felt that we were talking into the air.

The principal said, "You know that you have a very good reputation with the public schools nearby. They say that even if the children who come from this school are lacking in a subject or two they soon catch up and are easily ahead of the others in their class work." That was why he wanted to see what the school was like.

When they happened into the library, which was then in terrible disorder due to the unfinished condition of things (our colonists were trying to renovate the building), they noticed that one of our larger boys was working over some arithmetical problems in a book. They asked him what he was doing and what for. The boy answered that he was getting ready for the class that was to be started the next day, but he did not know what it was all for. The principal noticed that he was working over some complicated problems in fractions. He remarked to me that the boy did not know that he was working on problems that neither he nor anyone else would ever have to use. No one needs to figure out the result of 14/42x26/47, or anything like that. The principal deplored the fact that such problems are put into school books.

The younger man tried the usual argument of the necessity of acquiring the use of tools first in order to be able to use them for creative purposes afterwards. Evidently he was only trying me out for he readily understood when I insisted that tools are of little use to an undeveloped mind and that it is necessary to develop the mind along with the ability to use tools, to create while acquiring this ability; and that tools, including reading and writing, are usually given long before there is any mind to direct them, with the consequence that we have plenty of mere mechanics but few original thinkers or creators. When they left they said they hoped they could put some of our ideas into practice.

Later we were visited by two women teachers from the same school. They were enthusiastic about the work and stayed all morning. It has been interesting to Aunty and myself to see with what enthusiasm the children go to their work, but we had no idea of how the actions of the children would appear to outsiders. One of the incidents these teachers made special remark about was the way in which a seemingly confused rush after the assembly settled itself down into quiet work, as if the children knew what they were

after, knew their places and how to find them, all without any drill in school. They said, "You accomplish in one day what we cannot do in a year," or something to that effect. They seemed to be appreciative of how much more valuable it is to the individual to be self-directed than to be under the direction they have to be under in the public schools.

The other day I heard a little one ask Zack for materials with which to make a puppet. I asked Zack afterwards if the little one had been able to do anything with so complicated a thing as a puppet. He said that she made something resembling one. Had Zack been just a mechanic, or just a teacher, he would have discouraged the child by trying to get her to do it well or with a finish, or he would have done most of it for her and so given a wrong impression of her ability. I have not been much interested in such baubles, as they have seemed to me, but evidently they give a great deal of opportunity for original work in the making of head and face. Peggy Bridges, an expert in puppets, insists there is no better way for children to learn the correct use of language than through play with puppets, for with them they must suit the action to the word.

Weaving has become an activity of the boys recently and I understand that they are doing some good work, though original design does not play a large part as yet. It is astonishing how patient the children can be when they are interested, for weaving is a tedious job otherwise, especially the weaving of belts through card-looms. It would not be a good thing for any boy or girl to keep at that sort of thing regularly as it would tend to become machine-like, besides, it does not call for much physical activity. Nevertheless, it would not be a good thing to disturb a child while he is interested in finishing something. We repeatedly find fault with children who start much and finish little. We do not always recognize the fact that a child may have gotten all that it can get from the thing it has started. It may have been just an experiment. Some children are experimenting all the time, looking for the thing that will satisfy them.

Most of you have been introduced to Eric Schaefer who is a lover of music, a creative musician and an appreciator of creative work in general. He should have a fine opportunity to develop his creative ability through the work of the school and in his contact with the children. So-o-o-o, an interesting new activity is the rhythm band. Repeatedly I hear the boys in the shop acking Eric if it is not time for the music or reminding him that this is the day for the band. No matter what you may be doing children expect you to drop it at once to do what they want you to do and they usually keep you up to your promises. Besides having the rhythm band the children are making music of their own and Eric says they show considerable talent in making their own tunes.

An interesting experiment occurred with Aunty last week. There is a piano in the "art" room on which the children have acquired the bad habit of picking out some familiar tunes and hammering them out repeatedly. One little girl started to do that while Aunty was in the room, so Aunty asked her why she kept repeating the same thing instead of saying something new. But the little one thought it was a nice tune so why shouldn't she play it. "But that was said a long time ago by someone else and now you are just repeating what has been said many times. Why don't you say something of your own?" "I don't know how." "Why not try? Just sit down quietly and close your eyes until you feel very quiet and then go over to the piano and play something that you feel." She tried it, but the first attempt did not saisfy her. It was suggested that she sit quiet for a long time. The second attempt proved much better. The door of the next room had been closed so as not to disturb the others, but a number of children came in and wanted to try the same thing, from which there were some interesting results. So, you see, in a free atmosphere anything can be tried at any time. Aunty did not have to go to Eric as the music teacher to ask permission to try the experiment, by which time the interest might have evaporated. If the experiment only helps to get rid of the repetition of "Chopsticks" and "Sweet and Low" something will have been accomplished. But more important will be the confidence the children may have in their own power whether it is to produce music or something else.

A number of the boys are in the shop regularly if the weather permits, and usually a girl or two, especially the younger ones. Eric tells of an interesting conversation between two of the boys. Jim wanted to make a miniature propeller for the front of his bicycle. He managed to make one blade but when he had finished it he was not satisfied and threw it away. Jack had made a very good one, for he is a careful worker. Jim tried to get Jack to make one for him, to which Jack replied, "Why don't you make it yourself? You can make it just as good as I can but you don't stick to it until you get it right. I stick to it until I get it the way I want it. You could do it just as well if you tried." Anyhow, Jim finally induced Jack to make one for him. Afterwards Jack, in talking to Eric, told him that Jim is just as good a worker as he, and that he could do things as well if he tried, but that he has no patience. "I won't stop until I get it the way I want it, if it takes me all day. I like to work at it." Eric thought Jim was a bit lazy, but in view of the fact that Jim is a more active boy than Jack that would hardly explain the difference in attitude towards work. It might be said that he is a more disturbed boy and that he *wants* things rather than that he is interested in making them. Perhaps he has had too many finished things in his life, whereas it is likely that Jack has learned at home that if he wants something he had better go to work and make it.

Now I want to remind the parents that the teachers are on a starvation wage and that there are things in the School that should be attended to with which the parents can help. The saws are always in need of attention, not to speak of the chisels, and a number of chisels have disappeared. If you have any stray chisels that you don't need you might donate them to the school. We are also much in need of materials for the arts and crafts shops, as well as the weaving room. If you have any paints at home that you don't need the children at the School can use them. Also crayons, scrap copper and leather.

BOOK REVIEW

FLIGHT FROM THE CITY, by Ralph Borsodi. *Harpers, New York City.* 1933.

"When a family cannot support itself, and secure the food, clothing, and shelter it needs by getting employment in a factory, or an office, or a store, the only sensible thing for it to do is to support itself by producing these things for itself on its own homestead." With this statement the author of *This Ugly Civilization,* which has been reviewed in these columns previously, elaborates upon his idea of decentralization of industry showing not only how the farmer, land poor and without a market, and the city worker, living on charity and jobless, can escape the present depression caused by capitalistic industrialism and avoid the chimera of Socialism and Fascism, but also how he himself with his family near Suffern, N. Y., has proven this idea step by step, until he is now chosen as an advisor in the Homestead Units established near Dayton, Ohio—a detailed account of which is given in the appendix to the book.

Mr. Borsodi provides interesting details of the production of food—canned food and flour especially—loom-woven clothing and shelter (including running water and sewerage) at a cost less than that of factory production because the latter must gather raw materials from all over the country and ship back the finished product, while the product on the homestead is produced where it is consumed, thus making the saving. The development of the gas engine and the electric motor enable the homestead to compete with the factory.

The chapter on education, wherein the author tells of educating his two boys at home with two hours of academic instruction a day rather than have them waiting in and out of class at school for six hours, is especially worth while. The illustration of our industrial system taking the loom out of the home into the factory, producing a nation of neurotics and "problem" children by the hectic life of modern so-called civilization, and then placing the looms in institutions "to make the victims of this deprivation well again. Then they turn them, after curing them, back into their loomless homes to break down again," is especially apt.

Unemployment insurance, the author points out, does not solve any problem, and what he calls "the formula of despair": the return of city families to the farm "to exchange the insecurities of the labor market for the insecurities of the grain or cattle or produce markets—is merely to jump out of the frying pan into the fire." Neither does the "made work" or charity solve any problem, for the $824.20 yearly budget of a family of five in New York City is sufficient to establish a homestead.

The demoralization of Russia, where the hand-made Russian blouse is being replaced by factory-made western garments, and the failure of the Five Year Plan to produce food for the Russian people, is shown. The author contrasts the self-sufficiency of a farmer of 100 years ago with the utter helplessness of the inhabitants of an industrial center of today.

The only criticism to be made is of the plan of financing these farms, as an interest charge of $6.14 per week for an average family running for fifteen years would require an income at present. If the millions now spent on the sieve of relief were given outright to the individuals this problem would be solved. With the flabbiness of character, dependence upon the state, subservience to religious and jingoistic leaders on the part of the masses of the unemployed it is doubtful if any large proportion would live on homesteads, or have the pioneer spirit and tolerance to make a success. No other plan, however, has been given which presents a solution. It is likely that the masses will follow the promises of radical and conservative politicians; nationalistic or professedly internationalistic statesmen, and like the unemployed of Rome, accept the "corn" in lieu of freedom and the responsibility which freedom entails.

Ammon A. Hennacy

Anarchist Lectures *and* Open Forums

(In English)

FREE WORKERS' CENTRE

219 Second Avenue, New York City

SUNDAYS—OPEN FORUMS

March 11th—Stanley Gordon
"Psychology of Fear"

March 18th—Prominent Speakers
"Commemoration of the Paris Commune"

March 25th—Abe Colman
Subject to be announced

WEDNESDAYS—LECTURES

March 7th—Dr. D. Globus
"Hitler, Roosevelt, Stalin"

March 14th—Tom Wright
"The Hope of Anarchism"

March 21st—Dr. Wolf Adler
Subject to be announced

March 28th—Pat Quinlan
Subject to be announced

Spanish Workers' Defense & Publicity Committee

The readers of FREEDOM do not need to be reminded of the situation of our comrades in Spain, nor to be asked to lend their support to their cause. We wish to announce, however, the formation of the Spanish Workers' Defense and Publicity Committee by the representatives of various Anarchist and syndicalist groups in New York City, and to invite non-political groups in other cities to form similar committees to cooperate with us in spreading the truth about the Spanish revolution and sending funds to reliable comrades in Spain. Address the Committee, at 94 Fifth Avenue, New York City for circulars and further information.